

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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P R 131046Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2754
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 10719

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR TEXT (PARA 4)
E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MNUC, MASS, TECH, IN
SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM'S CALL ON DEFENSE MINISTER
JAGJIVAN RAM

1. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM CALLED ON DEFENSE MINISTER RAM
JULY 12 ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR GOHEEN, DEPTOFF AND
EMBOFF. ALSO PRESENT WAS DEFENSE SECRETARY BANERJI.
MAJOR TOPICS OF CONVERSATION FOLLOW:

2. INDIAN DPSA ACQUISITION. NEWSOM NOTED THAT INDIA
IS AWARE OF US VIEWS. IN LINE WITH OUR WORLD-WIDE ARMS
TRANSFER POLICY, WE HAD MADE DIFFICULT DECISION TO
TURN DOWN SWEDISH REQUEST TO SELL VIGGEN TO INDIA.
BECAUSE OF DELICATE SITUATION IN PAKISTAN FOLLOWING
AFGHAN COUP, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE GOI COULD
POSTPONE FINAL DPSA DECISION. IN RESPONSE RAM INDI-
CATED THAT A POSTPONEMENT OF THE DPSA DECISION BY "ONE
MONTH OR SO" WOULD NOT POSE ANY PROBLEMS. HE ADDED
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THAT HE REGRETTED GOVERNMENT HAD COME TO USE TERM DPSA
SINCE PLANES UNDER CONSIDERATION - ALTHOUGH FASTER - HAVE
A SHORTER RANGE THAN CURRENT FLEET OF CANBERRAS. BANERJI
NOTED THAT TOTAL INDIAN AIR COMBAT STRENGTH IS FALLING
EACH MONTH AS CANBERRAS ARE RETIRED.

3. PAKISTAN. NEWSOM EXPLAINED US HAD DECLINED TO SELL THE

A-7 TO PAKISTAN. IF THE REPROCESSING ISSUE IS RESOLVED IN SUCH A WAY THAT NO FURTHER TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT OCCURS, WE EXPECT PAKISTAN WILL SEEK A RESUMED MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP. BUT WE CAN GIVE NO GRANT AID AND ANY POSSIBLE CREDITS WOULD BE VERY LIMITED. IF THE GOP SEEKS TO BUY US AIRCRAFT, WE WOULD ONLY CONSIDER SELLING THE F-5, A PLANE OF LIMITED CAPABILITY. HE HOPED THIS WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD IN INDIA AS A LIMITED AND RESTRAINED ATTEMPT TO REASSURE PAKISTAN. THE DEFENSE MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATE FOR OUR KEEPING INDIA INFORMED OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND GENERALLY INDICATED INDIAN ACCEPTANCE OF RESTORATION OF A LIMITED US ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN.

4. INDIAN NUCLEAR POLICY. NEWSOM INQUIRED WHETHER INDIA WOULD CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN A MULTILATERAL OR REGIONAL ARRANGEMENT RENOUNCING THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. RAM RESPONDED THAT THIS WILL DEPEND ON WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES WANT AND NOTED THE DESAI GOVERNMENT'S STAND AGAINST NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES FOR INDIA. IF PAKISTAN SHOULD ACQUIRE A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY, HE SAID INDIA WILL NOT ACQUIRE NUCLEAR WEAPONS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
GOHEEN

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NNN

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